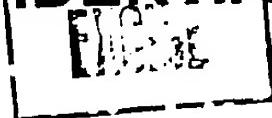


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TAIWAN/PRC: RELATIONS WARMING

A high-level mainland affairs conference in Taipei has approved through-airline booking to the PRC via Hong Kong and familiarization visits to the PRC by Taiwan officials, according to press reports. The conference also proposed direct shipping, by Taiwan vessels only, between selected cross-strait ports. Beijing on September 18 "welcomed" a note from Taiwan about direct transport links and proposed talks by intermediary organizations of the two sides, according to Embassy Beijing.

Comment:

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Beijing views reunification as a long-term process, and welcomes Taiwan trade and investment for both political and economic reasons.

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